



Grace Ashruf exhibits her “New Horizons” at the Access Art Gallery

Access Art Gallery and the Pro Crea Foundation located on the Caya Betico Croes in downtown Oranjestad were proud to unveil the latest collection by popular regional artist Grace Ashruf. The exhibition, titled “New Horizons” opened on Thursday evening, January 18, and the current collection shows the many beautiful landscapes that Grace Ashruf observes from her home adjacent to a *salinja* (water basin.)

“Living on Aruba we are surrounded by various horizons, and I have incorporated it into this collection,” Grace told the gathering at the gallery during the launching. “To me, horizons represent light and strength. The horizon symbolizes future and hope, which inspires me to embrace the unknown in a positive way, even on a “down” day. Horizons can be dark, but I’ll always look for the bright spots.”

The works that adorn the walls of the gallery until February 20 are vibrant with color, sometimes providing contrasts, and others in monotone variations of one color, but always vivid in their depiction of their subject. This collection of semi-abstract work utilizes varying textures, and layering of different materials to give the pieces a very tactile presence. This is a departure from her one-woman show at the Cas di Cultura last year titled “The Caribbean; Silence and Wind.” The use of color and bold images, and the island images of boats and native cunucu houses are present in her new collection, something to which she will always return, she revealed. Though best observed from a slight distance to perceive the entire effect, close study of her works reveal interesting textures, and subtleties. For the observer, the paintings capture the feeling of sunsets and night, with pinpoints of light reflected on the water. Her use of varying colors conveys different times of the day, revealing how the light changes the landscape; creating new effects, hour by hour.

Grace pursued a formal art education first at the Nola Hatterman Institute in her homeland of Suriname, then spent two years in Guatemala studying under revered local artist at the Tuscan and Monet Art Schools, and then at the Rafael Landivar University. After studying for three years at the Academi di Arti and the Classic Caribbean Art School in Curacao, she settled in Aruba, which has been a source of inspiration for her ever since. “The natural beauty that greets me every day has played a major role in inspiring this latest collection,” she affirms.

“Grace’s contemporary artwork is deeply rooted in her observations of Nature, but evolves in surprising directions through the process of painting,” according to Access curator Renwick Heronimo. “The light of the horizon is reflected within each painting, creating a depth and three-dimensional effect visible even in her abstracts”

The exhilarating acrylics on canvas of Grace Ashruf can be seen at the Access Art Gallery daily, Monday through Saturday from 10:00 AM until 8:00 PM. The Access Annex also displays the works of various other artists and is also found on the main street of Oranjestad, the Caya Betico Croes. For more information contact Access Art Gallery at 588-7837 or 588-7379.